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U.S. Western District Clerk Office

In reference to case # 1:20-CV-01176

Please find attached exhibits G1-6

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"9/11" redirects here. It is not to be confused with November 9.

For other uses of "9/11", see 9/11 (disambiguation).

The September 11 attacks, often referred to as 9/11,[a] were a series of four coordinated terrorist attacks by the Wahhabi[3] terrorist group Al-Qaeda[4][5][6] against the United States on the morning of Tuesday, September 11, 2001. The attacks resulted in 2,977 fatalities, over 25,000 injuries, and substantial long-term health consequences, in addition to at least \$10 billion in infrastructure and property damage.[7][8] It is the deadliest terrorist attack in human history and the single deadliest incident for firefighters and law enforcement officers in the history of the United States, with 340[9] and 72 killed,[10][11] respectively.

[September 11 attacks](#)

[Part of terrorism in the United States](#)

[Top row: The Twin Towers of the](#)

[World Trade Center burning](#)

[2nd row, left to right: Collapsed section of the Pentagon; Flight 175 crashes into 2 WTC](#)

[3rd row, left to right: A firefighter requests assistance at World Trade Center site;](#)

[An engine from Flight 93 is recovered](#)

[Bottom row: Flight 77's collision with the](#)

[Pentagon as captured by three](#)

[consecutive CCTV frames](#)

[Location](#)

Manhattan, New York, U.S.;
 Arlington County, Virginia, U.S.;
 Stonycreek Township near
 Shanksville, Pennsylvania, U.S.

Date

September 11, 2001; 19 years ago
 8:46 – 10:28 a.m. (EDT)

Target

World Trade Center
 (AA 11 and UA 175)
 The Pentagon (AA 77)
 U.S. Capitol/the White House
 (UA 93; partially successful diversion from target)

Attack type

Aircraft hijackings
 Suicide attacks
 Mass murder
 Islamic terrorism

Deaths

2,996
 (2,977 victims + 19 Al-Qaeda terrorists)

Injured

25,000[1]

Perpetrators

Al-Qaeda[2]
 (see also: responsibility and hijackers)

No. of participants

19

Four passenger airliners which had departed from airports in the northeastern United States bound for California were hijacked by 19 al-Qaeda terrorists. Two of the planes, American Airlines Flight 11 and United Airlines Flight 175, crashed into the North and South towers, respectively, of the World Trade Center complex in Lower Manhattan. Within an hour and 42 minutes, both 110-story towers collapsed. Debris and the resulting fires caused a partial or complete collapse of all other buildings in the World Trade Center complex, including the 47-story 7 World Trade Center tower, as well as significant damage to ten other large surrounding structures. A third plane, American Airlines Flight 77, was crashed into the Pentagon (the headquarters of the U.S. Department of Defense) in Arlington County, Virginia, which led to a partial collapse of the building's west side. The fourth plane, United Airlines Flight 93, was initially flown toward Washington, D.C., but crashed into a field in Stonycreek Township, Pennsylvania, after passengers thwarted the hijackers.

Suspicion quickly fell onto al-Qaeda. The United States responded by launching the War on Terror and invading Afghanistan to depose the Taliban, which had not complied with U.S. demands to expel al-Qaeda from Afghanistan and extradite their leader Osama bin Laden. Many countries strengthened their anti-terrorism legislation and

expanded the powers of law enforcement and intelligence agencies to prevent terrorist attacks. Although bin Laden initially denied any involvement, in 2004 he claimed responsibility for the attacks.[2] Al-Qaeda and bin Laden cited U.S. support of Israel, the presence of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia, and sanctions against Iraq as motives. After evading capture for almost a decade, bin Laden was located in Pakistan in 2011 and killed during a U.S. military raid.

The destruction of the World Trade Center and nearby infrastructure seriously harmed the economy of New York City and had a significant effect on global markets. The U.S. and Canadian civilian airspaces were closed until September 13, while Wall Street was closed until September 17. Many closings, evacuations, and cancellations followed, out of respect or fear of further attacks. Cleanup of the World Trade Center site was completed in May 2002, and the Pentagon was repaired within a year. The construction of One World Trade Center began in November 2006, and the building opened in November 2014.[12][13] Numerous memorials have been constructed, including the National September 11 Memorial & Museum in New York City, the Pentagon Memorial in Arlington County, Virginia, and the Flight 93 National Memorial at the Pennsylvania crash site.

Background

Further information: Timeline of the September 11 attacks and Responsibility for the September 11 attacks

Al-Qaeda

Further information: Al-Qaeda, Jihad, and Wahhabism

The origins of al-Qaeda can be traced to 1979 when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Osama bin Laden travelled to Afghanistan and helped to organize Arab mujahideen to resist the Soviets.[14] Under the guidance of Ayman al-Zawahiri, bin Laden became more radical.[15] In 1996, bin Laden issued his first fatw?, calling for American soldiers to leave Saudi Arabia.[16]

In a second fatw? in 1998, bin Laden outlined his objections to American foreign policy with respect to Israel, as well as the continued presence of American troops in Saudi Arabia after the Gulf War.[17] Bin Laden used Islamic texts to exhort Muslims to attack Americans until the stated grievances were reversed. Muslim legal scholars "have throughout Islamic history unanimously agreed that the jihad is an individual duty if the enemy destroys the Muslim countries", according to bin Laden.[17]

Osama bin Laden

Further information: Osama bin Laden, Videos and audio recordings of Osama bin Laden, and Death of Osama bin Laden

Osama bin Laden at about 40 years of age in 1997

Bin Laden orchestrated the attacks and initially denied involvement but later recanted his false statements.[2][18][19] Al Jazeera broadcast a statement by bin Laden on September 16, 2001, stating, "I stress that I have not carried out this act, which appears to have been carried out by individuals with their own motivation." [20] In November 2001, U.S. forces recovered a videotape from a destroyed house in

Jalalabad, Afghanistan. In the video, bin Laden is seen talking to Khaled al-Harbi and admits foreknowledge of the attacks.[21] On December 27, 2001, a second bin Laden video was released. In the video, he said:

It has become clear that the West in general and America in particular have an unspeakable hatred for Islam. ... It is the hatred of crusaders. Terrorism against America deserves to be praised because it was a response to injustice, aimed at forcing America to stop its support for Israel, which kills our people. ... We say that the end of the United States is imminent, whether Bin Laden or his followers are alive or dead, for the awakening of the Muslim umma (nation) has occurred but he stopped short of admitting responsibility for the attacks.[22]

Shortly before the U.S. presidential election in 2004, bin Laden used a taped statement to publicly acknowledge al-Qaeda's involvement in the attacks on the United States. He admitted his direct link to the attacks and said they were carried out because:

we are free ... and want to regain freedom for our nation. As you undermine our security, we undermine yours.[23]

Bin Laden said he had personally directed his followers to attack the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.[24][25] Another video obtained by Al Jazeera in September 2006 shows bin Laden with Ramzi bin al-Shibh, as well as two hijackers, Hamza al-Ghamdi and Wail al-Shehri, as they make preparations for the attacks.[26] The U.S. never formally indicted bin Laden for the 9/11 attacks, but he was on the FBI's Most Wanted List for the bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya.[27][28] After a 10-year manhunt, U.S. President Barack Obama announced that bin Laden was killed by American special forces in his compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on May 1, 2011.[29]

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed

Main article: Khalid Sheikh Mohammed

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed after his capture in 2003

Journalist Yosri Fouda of the Arabic television channel Al Jazeera reported that in April 2002, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed admitted his involvement in the attacks, along with Ramzi bin al-Shibh.[30][31][32] The 2004 9/11 Commission Report determined that the animosity towards the United States felt by Mohammed, the principal architect of the 9/11 attacks, stemmed from his "violent disagreement with U.S. foreign policy favoring Israel".[33] Mohammed was also an adviser and financier of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and the uncle of Ramzi Yousef, the lead bomber in that attack.[34][35]

Mohammed was arrested on March 1, 2003, in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, by Pakistani security officials working with the CIA. He was then held at multiple CIA secret prisons and Guantanamo Bay where he was interrogated and tortured with methods including waterboarding.[36][37] During U.S. hearings at Guantanamo Bay in March 2007, Mohammed again confessed his responsibility for the attacks, stating he "was responsible for the 9/11 operation from A to Z" and that his statement was not made under duress.[32][38]

A letter presented by the lawyers of Khaled Sheikh Mohammed in the U.S. District Court, Manhattan on July 26, 2019 indicated that he was interested in testifying about Saudi Arabia's role in the 9/11 attacks and helping the victims and families of the victims of 9/11 in exchange for the United States not seeking the death penalty against him. James Kreindler, one of the lawyers for the victims, raised question over the usefulness of Mohammed.[1]

Other al-Qaeda members

Further information: Trials related to the September 11 attacks

In "Substitution for Testimony of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed" from the trial of Zacarias Moussaoui, five people are identified as having been completely aware of the operation's details. They are bin Laden, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, Ramzi bin al-Shibh, Abu Turab al-Urduni, and Mohammed Atef.[39] To date, only peripheral figures have been tried or convicted for the attacks.

On September 26, 2005, the Spanish high court sentenced Abu Dahdah to 27 years in prison for conspiracy on the 9/11 attacks and being a member of the terrorist organization al-Qaeda. At the same time, another 17 al-Qaeda members were sentenced to penalties of between six and eleven years.[40] On February 16, 2006, the Spanish Supreme Court reduced the Abu Dahdah penalty to 12 years because it considered that his participation in the conspiracy was not proven.[41]

Also in 2006, Moussaoui—who some originally suspected might have been the assigned 20th hijacker—was convicted for the lesser role of conspiracy to commit acts of terrorism and air piracy. He was sentenced to life in prison without parole in the United States.[42][43] Mounir el-Motassadeq, an associate of the Hamburg-based hijackers, served 15 years in Germany for his role in helping the hijackers prepare for the attacks. He was released in October 2018, and deported to Morocco.[44]

The Hamburg cell in Germany included radical Islamists who eventually came to be key operatives in the 9/11 attacks.[45] Mohamed Atta, Marwan al-Shehhi, Ziad Jarrah, Ramzi bin al-Shibh, and Said Bahaji were all members of al-Qaeda's Hamburg cell.[46]

Motives

Main article: Motives for the September 11 attacks

Osama bin Laden's declaration of a holy war against the United States, and a 1998 fatw? signed by bin Laden and others, calling for the killing of Americans,[17] are seen by investigators as evidence of his motivation.[47] In bin Laden's November 2002 "Letter to America", he explicitly stated that al-Qaeda's motives for their attacks include:

U.S. support of Israel[48][49]

support for the "attacks against Muslims" in Somalia

support of Philippines against Muslims in the Moro conflict

support for Israeli "aggression" against Muslims in Lebanon

support of Russian "atrocities against Muslims" in Chechnya

pro-American governments in the Middle East (who "act as your agents") being against

Muslim interests

support of Indian "oppression against Muslims" in Kashmir

the presence of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia[50]

the sanctions against Iraq[48]

After the attacks, bin Laden and al-Zawahiri released additional videotapes and audio recordings, some of which repeated those reasons for the attacks. Two particularly important publications were bin Laden's 2002 "Letter to America",[51] and a 2004 videotape by bin Laden.[52]

Bin Laden interpreted Muhammad as having banned the "permanent presence of infidels in Arabia".[53] In 1996, bin Laden issued a fatw? calling for American troops to leave Saudi Arabia. In 1998, al-Qaeda wrote, "for over seven years the United States has been occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest of places, the Arabian Peninsula, plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, humiliating its people, terrorizing its neighbors, and turning its bases in the Peninsula into a spearhead through which to fight the neighboring Muslim peoples."[54]

In a December 1999 interview, bin Laden said he felt that Americans were "too near to Mecca", and considered this a provocation to the entire Muslim world.[55] One analysis of suicide terrorism suggested that without U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia, al-Qaeda likely would not have been able to get people to commit to suicide missions.[56]

In the 1998 fatw?, al-Qaeda identified the Iraq sanctions as a reason to kill Americans, condemning the "protracted blockade"[54] among other actions that constitute a declaration of war against "Allah, his messenger, and Muslims." [54] The fatw? declared that "the ruling to kill the Americans and their allies—civilians and military—is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy mosque of Mecca from their grip, and in order for their [the Americans'] armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim." [17][57]

In 2004, Bin Laden claimed that the idea of destroying the towers had first occurred to him in 1982, when he witnessed Israel's bombardment of high-rise apartment buildings during the 1982 Lebanon War.[58][59] Some analysts, including Mearsheimer and Walt, also claimed that U.S. support of Israel was one motive for the attacks.[49][55] In 2004 and 2010, bin Laden again connected the September 11 attacks with U.S. support of Israel, although most of the letter expressed bin Laden's disdain for President Bush and bin Laden's hope to "destroy and bankrupt" the U.S.[60][61]

Other motives have been suggested in addition to those stated by bin Laden and al-Qaeda. Some authors suggested the "humiliation" that resulted from the Islamic world falling behind the Western world—this discrepancy was rendered especially visible by the globalization trend[62][63] and a desire to provoke the U.S. into a broader war against the Islamic world in the hope of motivating more allies to support al-Qaeda. Similarly, others have argued that 9/11 was a strategic move with the objective of provoking America into a war that would incite a pan-Islamic revolution.[64][65]

Planning

Main article: Planning of the September 11 attacks

Map showing the attacks on the World Trade Center (The planes are not drawn to scale.)

The attacks were conceived by Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who first presented it to Osama bin Laden in 1996.[66] At that time, bin Laden and al-Qaeda were in a period of transition, having just relocated back to Afghanistan from Sudan.[67] The 1998 African Embassy bombings and bin Laden's February 1998 fatw^a marked a turning point of al-Qaeda's terrorist operation,[68] as bin Laden became intent on attacking the United States.

In late 1998 or early 1999, bin Laden gave approval for Mohammed to go forward with organizing the plot.[69] Mohammed, bin Laden, and bin Laden's deputy Mohammed Atef held a series of meetings in early 1999.[70] Atef provided operational support, including target selections and helping arrange travel for the hijackers.[67] Bin Laden overruled Mohammed, rejecting potential targets such as the U.S. Bank Tower in Los Angeles for lack of time.[71][72]

Diagram showing the attacks on the World Trade Center

Bin Laden provided leadership and financial support, and was involved in selecting participants.[73] He initially selected Nawaf al-Hazmi and Khalid al-Mihdhar, both experienced jihadists who had fought in Bosnia. Hazmi and Mihdhar arrived in the United States in mid-January 2000. In early 2000, Hazmi and Mihdhar took flying lessons in San Diego, California, but both spoke little English, performed poorly in flying lessons, and eventually served as secondary—or "muscle"—hijackers.[74][75]

In late 1999, a group of men from Hamburg, Germany arrived in Afghanistan; the group included Mohamed Atta, Marwan al-Shehhi, Ziad Jarrah, and Ramzi bin al-Shibh.[76] Bin Laden selected these men because they were educated, could speak English, and had experience living in the West.[77] New recruits were routinely screened for special skills and al-Qaeda leaders consequently discovered that Hani Hanjour already had a commercial pilot's license.[78] Mohammed later said that he helped the hijackers blend in by teaching them how to order food in restaurants and dress in Western clothing.[79]

Hanjour arrived in San Diego on December 8, 2000, joining Hazmi.[80]:6–7 They soon left for Arizona, where Hanjour took refresher training.[80]:7 Marwan al-Shehhi arrived at the end of May 2000, while Atta arrived on June 3, 2000, and Jarrah arrived on June 27, 2000.[80]:6 Bin al-Shibh applied several times for a visa to the United States, but as a Yemeni, he was rejected out of concerns he would overstay his visa.[80]:4, 14 Bin al-Shibh stayed in Hamburg, providing coordination between Atta and Mohammed.[80]:16 The three Hamburg cell members all took pilot training in South Florida at Huffman Aviation.[80]:6

In spring of 2001, the secondary hijackers began arriving in the United States.[81] In July 2001, Atta met with bin al-Shibh in Spain, where they coordinated details of the plot, including final target selection. Bin al-Shibh also passed along bin Laden's wish for

the attacks to be carried out as soon as possible.[82] Some of the hijackers received passports from corrupt Saudi officials who were family members, or used fraudulent passports to gain entry.[83]

There is some idea that 9/11 was selected by the hijackers as the date of the attack because of its resemblance to 9-1-1, the phone number to report emergencies in the U.S. However, Lawrence Wright wrote that the hijackers chose it because September 11, 1683 is when the King of Poland began the battle that turned back the Muslim armies from the Ottoman Empire that were attempting to capture Vienna. For Osama bin Laden, this was a date when the West gained some dominance over Islam, and by attacking on this date, he hoped to make a step in Islam "winning" the war for worldwide power and influence.[84]

Prior intelligence

Main article: September 11 intelligence before the attacks

In late 1999, al-Qaeda associate Walid bin Attash ("Khallad") contacted Mihdhar, telling him to meet him in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Hazmi and Abu Bara al Yemeni would also be in attendance. The NSA intercepted a telephone call mentioning the meeting, Mihdhar, and the name "Nawaf" (Hazmi). While the agency feared "Something nefarious might be afoot", it took no further action. The CIA had already been alerted by Saudi intelligence about the status of Mihdhar and Hazmi as al-Qaeda members, and a CIA team broke into Mihdhar's Dubai hotel room and discovered that Mihdhar had a U.S. visa. While Alec Station alerted intelligence agencies worldwide about this fact, it did not share this information with the FBI. The Malaysian Special Branch observed the January 5, 2000 meeting of the two al-Qaeda members, and informed the CIA that Mihdhar, Hazmi, and Khallad were flying to Bangkok, but the CIA never notified other agencies of this, nor did it ask the State Department to put Mihdhar on its watchlist. An FBI liaison to Alec Station asked permission to inform the FBI of the meeting but was told: "This is not a matter for the FBI." [85]

By late June, senior counter-terrorism official Richard Clarke and CIA director George Tenet were "convinced that a major series of attacks was about to come", although the CIA believed the attacks would likely occur in Saudi Arabia or Israel.[86] In early July, Clarke put domestic agencies on "full alert", telling them, "Something really spectacular is going to happen here. soon." He asked the FBI and the State Department to alert the embassies and police departments, and the Defense Department to go to "Threat Condition Delta".[87][88] Clarke would later write: "Somewhere in CIA there was information that two known al Qaeda terrorists had come into the United States. Somewhere in FBI there was information that strange things had been going on at flight schools in the United States. . . . They had specific information about individual terrorists from which one could have deduced what was about to happen. None of that information got to me or the White House." [89]

On July 13, Tom Wilshire, a CIA agent assigned to the FBI's international terrorism division, emailed his superiors at the CIA's Counterterrorism Center (CTC) requesting permission to inform the FBI that Hazmi was in the country and that Mihdhar had a U.S. visa. The CIA never responded.[90]

The same day in July, Margarette Gillespie, an FBI analyst working in the CTC, was told to review material about the Malaysia meeting. She was not told of the participants' presence in the U.S. The CIA gave Gillespie surveillance photos of Mihdhar and Hazmi from the meeting to show to FBI counterterrorism, but did not tell her their significance. The Intelink database informed her not to share intelligence material on the meeting to criminal investigators. When shown the photos, the FBI were refused more details on their significance, and they were not given Mihdhar's date of birth nor passport number.[91] In late August 2001, Gillespie told the INS, the State Department, the Customs Service, and the FBI to put Hazmi and Mihdhar on their watchlists, but the FBI was prohibited from using criminal agents in the search for the duo, which hindered their efforts.[92]

Also in July, a Phoenix-based FBI agent sent a message to FBI headquarters, Alec Station, and to FBI agents in New York alerting them to "the possibility of a coordinated effort by Osama bin Laden to send students to the United States to attend civil aviation universities and colleges". The agent, Kenneth Williams, suggested the need to interview all flight school managers and identify all Arab students seeking flight training.[93] In July, Jordan alerted the U.S. that al-Qaeda was planning an attack on the U.S.; "months later", Jordan notified the U.S. that the attack's codename was "The Big Wedding" and that it involved airplanes.[94]

On August 6, 2001, the CIA's Presidential Daily Brief ("PDB"), designated "For the President Only", was entitled "Bin Ladin Determined to Strike in U.S." The memo noted that FBI information "indicates patterns of suspicious activity in this country consistent with preparations for hijackings or other types of attacks".[95]

In mid-August, one Minnesota flight school alerted the FBI about Zacarias Moussaoui, who had asked "suspicious questions". The FBI found that Moussaoui was a radical who had traveled to Pakistan, and the INS arrested him for overstaying his French visa. Their request to search his laptop was denied by FBI headquarters due to the lack of probable cause.[96]

The failures in intelligence-sharing were attributed to 1995 Justice Department policies limiting intelligence sharing, combined with CIA and NSA reluctance to reveal "sensitive sources and methods" such as tapped phones.[97] Testifying before the 9/11 Commission in April 2004, then-Attorney General John Ashcroft recalled that the "single greatest structural cause for the September 11th problem was the wall that segregated or separated criminal investigators and intelligence agents".[98] Clarke also wrote: "There were failures in the organizations failures to get information to the right place at the right time." [99]

Attacks

Further information: Timeline for the day of the September 11 attacks

Flight paths of the four planes used on September 11

Early on the morning of September 11, 2001, 19 hijackers took control of four commercial airliners (two Boeing 757s and two Boeing 767s) en route to California (three headed to LAX in Los Angeles and one to SFO in San Francisco) after takeoffs from Logan International Airport in Boston, Massachusetts; Newark Liberty International Airport in Newark, New Jersey; and Washington Dulles International Airport in Loudoun and Fairfax counties in Virginia.[100] Large planes with long flights were selected for hijacking because they would be full of fuel.[101]

The four flights were:

American Airlines Flight 11: a Boeing 767 aircraft, departed Logan Airport at 7:59 a.m. en route to Los Angeles with a crew of 11 and 76 passengers, not including five hijackers. The hijackers flew the plane into the northern facade of the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City at 8:46 a.m.

United Airlines Flight 175: a Boeing 767 aircraft, departed Logan Airport at 8:14 a.m. en route to Los Angeles with a crew of nine and 51 passengers, not including five hijackers. The hijackers flew the plane into the southern facade of the South Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City at 9:03 a.m.

American Airlines Flight 77: a Boeing 757 aircraft, departed Washington Dulles International Airport at 8:20 a.m. en route to Los Angeles with a crew of six and 53 passengers, not including five hijackers. The hijackers flew the plane into the western facade of the Pentagon in Arlington County, Virginia, at 9:37 a.m.

United Airlines Flight 93: a Boeing 757 aircraft, departed Newark International Airport at 8:42 a.m. en route to San Francisco, with a crew of seven and 33 passengers, not including four hijackers. As passengers attempted to subdue the hijackers, the aircraft crashed into a field in Stonycreek Township near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, at 10:03 a.m.

Media coverage was extensive during the attacks and aftermath, beginning moments after the first crash into the World Trade Center.[102]

There were 0 Survivors (Including the Hijackers) from the following 4 Flights

Aircraft

Number of Occupants

Time

Location

Casualties

Operator

Flight Number

Aircraft Type

Crew

Passengers#

Hijackers

Time of Departure

Time of Crash
Departed From
En Route To
Crash Site
Ground fatalities
Total fatalities
American Airlines
11
Boeing 767-223ER
11
76
5
7:59
8:46
Logan International Airport
Los Angeles International Airport
North Tower of the World Trade Center
1600*
1692^
United Airlines
175
Boeing 767-222
9
51
5
8:14
9:03
Logan International Airport
Los Angeles International Airport
South Tower of the World Trade Center
900*
965^
American Airlines
77
Boeing 757-223
6
53
5
8:20
9:37
Washington Dulles International Airport
Los Angeles International Airport
West wall of Pentagon
125*
64**
United Airlines

93

Boeing 757-222

7

33

4

8:42

10:03

Newark Int'l Airport

San Francisco Int'l Airport

Field in Stonycreek Township near Shanksville

0

44**

Total number of Occupants\$

33

213

19

Total number of Casualties\$

2669

2765

*Including emergency workers **Including hijackers ^Unconfirmed #Does not include Hijackers \$Approximated

The four crashes

See also: Media documentation of the September 11 attacks

Collapse of the towers as seen from across the Hudson River in New Jersey

At 8:46 a.m., five hijackers crashed American Airlines Flight 11 into the northern facade of the World Trade Center's North Tower (1 WTC). At 9:03 a.m., another five hijackers crashed United Airlines Flight 175 into the southern facade of the South Tower (2 WTC).[103][104] Five hijackers flew American Airlines Flight 77 into the Pentagon at 9:37 a.m.[105] A fourth flight, United Airlines Flight 93, crashed near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, southeast of Pittsburgh, at 10:03 a.m. after the passengers fought the four hijackers. Flight 93's target is believed to have been either the Capitol or the White House.[101] Flight 93's cockpit voice recorder revealed crew and passengers tried to seize control of the plane from the hijackers after learning through phone calls that Flights 11, 77, and 175 had been crashed into buildings that morning.[106] Once it became evident that the passengers might gain control, the hijackers rolled the plane and intentionally crashed it.[107][108]

The north face of Two World Trade Center (south tower) immediately after being struck by United Airlines Flight 175

Some passengers and crew members who called from the aircraft using the cabin air phone service and mobile phones provided details: several hijackers were aboard each plane; they used mace, tear gas, or pepper spray to overcome attendants; and some people aboard had been stabbed.[109] Reports indicated hijackers stabbed and killed pilots, flight attendants, and one or more passengers.[100][110] According to the 9/11 Commission's final report, the hijackers had recently purchased multi-function hand

tools and assorted Leatherman-type utility knives with locking blades, which were not forbidden to passengers at the time, but were not found among the possessions left behind by the hijackers.[111][112] A flight attendant on Flight 11, a passenger on Flight 175, and passengers on Flight 93 said the hijackers had bombs, but one of the passengers said he thought the bombs were fake. The FBI found no traces of explosives at the crash sites, and the 9/11 Commission concluded that the bombs were probably fake.[100]

Three buildings in the World Trade Center collapsed due to fire-induced structural failure.[113] The South Tower collapsed at 9:59 a.m. after burning for 56 minutes in a fire caused by the impact of United Airlines Flight 175 and the explosion of its fuel.[113] The North Tower collapsed at 10:28 a.m. after burning for 102 minutes.[113] When the North Tower collapsed, debris fell on the nearby 7 World Trade Center building (7 WTC), damaging it and starting fires. These fires burned for hours, compromising the building's structural integrity, and 7 WTC collapsed at 5:21 p.m.[114][115] The west side of the Pentagon sustained significant damage.

Play media

Security camera footage of American Airlines Flight 77 hitting the Pentagon.[116] The plane hits the Pentagon approximately 86 seconds after the start of this recording. At 9:42 a.m., the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grounded all civilian aircraft within the continental U.S., and civilian aircraft already in flight were told to land immediately.[117] All international civilian aircraft were either turned back or redirected to airports in Canada or Mexico, and were banned from landing on United States territory for three days.[118] The attacks created widespread confusion among news organizations and air traffic controllers. Among the unconfirmed and often contradictory news reports aired throughout the day, one of the most prevalent said a car bomb had been detonated at the U.S. State Department's headquarters in Washington, D.C.[119] Another jet—Delta Air Lines Flight 1989—was suspected of having been hijacked, but the aircraft responded to controllers and landed safely in Cleveland, Ohio.[120]

In an April 2002 interview, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and Ramzi bin al-Shibh, who are believed to have organized the attacks, said Flight 93's intended target was the United States Capitol, not the White House.[121] During the planning stage of the attacks, Mohamed Atta, the hijacker and pilot of Flight 11, thought the White House might be too tough a target and sought an assessment from Hani Hanjour (who hijacked and piloted Flight 77).[122] Mohammed said al-Qaeda initially planned to target nuclear installations rather than the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, but decided against it, fearing things could "get out of control".[123] Final decisions on targets, according to Mohammed, were left in the hands of the pilots.[122] If any pilot could not reach his intended target, he was to crash the plane.[101]

Casualties

Main articles: Casualties of the September 11 attacks and Emergency workers killed in the September 11 attacks

The remains of 6, 7, and 1 WTC on September 17, 2001

A surviving portion of the wall from the Twin Towers

The attacks caused the deaths of 2,996 people (including all 19 hijackers) and injured more than 6,000 others.[124] The death toll included 265 on the four planes (from which there were no survivors), 2,606 in the World Trade Center and in the surrounding area, and 125 at the Pentagon.[125][126] Most of those who perished were civilians, with the exception of 340 firefighters, 72 law enforcement officers, 55 military personnel, and the 19 terrorists who died in the attacks.[127][128] After New York, New Jersey lost the most state citizens, with the city of Hoboken having the most New Jersey citizens who died in the attacks.[129] More than 90 countries lost citizens in the September 11 attacks;[130] for example, the 67 Britons who died were more than in any other terrorist attack anywhere as of October 2002.[131] The attacks are the deadliest terrorist attacks in world history.[8]

In Arlington County, Virginia, 125 Pentagon workers lost their lives when Flight 77 crashed into the western side of the building. Of these, 70 were civilians and 55 were military personnel, many of whom worked for the United States Army or the United States Navy. The Army lost 47 civilian employees, six civilian contractors, and 22 soldiers, while the Navy lost six civilian employees, three civilian contractors, and 33 sailors. Seven Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) civilian employees were also among the dead in the attack, as well as an Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) contractor.[132][133][134] Lieutenant General Timothy Maude, an Army Deputy Chief of Staff, was the highest-ranking military official killed at the Pentagon.[135]

The Statue of Liberty with the towers burning in the background
In New York City, more than 90% of the workers and visitors who died in the towers had been at or above the points of impact.[136] In the North Tower, 1,355 people at or above the point of impact were trapped and died of smoke inhalation, fell or jumped from the tower to escape the smoke and flames, or were killed in the building's eventual collapse. The destruction of all three staircases in the tower when Flight 11 hit made it impossible for anyone above the impact zone to escape. 107 people below the point of impact died as well.[136]

In the South Tower, one stairwell, Stairwell A, was left intact after Flight 175 hit, allowing 14 people located on the floors of impact (including one man who saw the plane coming at him) and four more from the floors above to escape. New York City 9-1-1 operators who received calls from people inside the tower were not well informed of the situation as it rapidly unfolded and as a result, told callers not to descend the tower on their own.[137] In total 630 people died in that tower, fewer than half the number killed in the North Tower.[136] Casualties in the South Tower were significantly reduced because some occupants decided to start evacuating as soon as the North Tower was struck.[138] The failure to evacuate the South Tower fully after the first jet crash into the North Tower was described by USA Today as "one of the day's great tragedies".[139]

An Urban Search and Rescue Task Force German shepherd dog works to uncover victims at the site of the World Trade Center after the attacks.
At least 200 people fell or jumped to their deaths from the burning towers (as exemplified in the photograph The Falling Man), landing on the streets and rooftops of

adjacent buildings hundreds of feet below.[140] Some occupants of each tower above the point of impact made their way toward the roof in the hope of helicopter rescue, but the roof access doors were locked.[141] No plan existed for helicopter rescues, and the combination of roof equipment, thick smoke, and intense heat prevented helicopters from approaching.[142] A total of 411 emergency workers died as they tried to rescue people and fight fires. The New York City Fire Department (FDNY) lost 343 firefighters, including a chaplain and two paramedics.[143] The New York City Police Department (NYPD) lost 23 officers.[144] The Port Authority Police Department (PAPD) lost 37 officers.[145] Eight emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and paramedics from private emergency medical services units were killed.[146]

Cantor Fitzgerald L.P., an investment bank on the 101st–105th floors of the North Tower, lost 658 employees, considerably more than any other employer.[147] Marsh Inc., located immediately below Cantor Fitzgerald on floors 93–100, lost 358 employees,[148][149] and 175 employees of Aon Corporation were also killed.[150] The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) estimated that about 17,400 civilians were in the World Trade Center complex at the time of the attacks. Turnstile counts from the Port Authority suggest 14,154 people were typically in the Twin Towers by 8:45 a.m.[151][page needed][152] Most people below the impact zone safely evacuated the buildings.[153]

Deaths (victims + hijackers)

New York City

World Trade Center

2,606[125][154]

American 11

87 + 5[155]

United 175

60 + 5[156]

Arlington

Pentagon

125[157]

American 77

59 + 5[158]

Near Shanksville

United 93

40 + 4[159]

Total

2,977 + 19

Weeks after the attack, the death toll was estimated to be over 6,000, more than twice the number of deaths eventually confirmed.[160] The city was only able to identify remains for about 1,600 of the World Trade Center victims. The medical examiner's office collected "about 10,000 unidentified bone and tissue fragments that cannot be matched to the list of the dead".[161] Bone fragments were still being found in 2006 by workers who were preparing to demolish the damaged Deutsche Bank Building. In 2010, a team of anthropologists and archaeologists searched for human remains and

personal items at the Fresh Kills Landfill, where 72 more human remains were recovered, bringing the total found to 1,845. DNA profiling continues in an attempt to identify additional victims.[162][163][164] The remains are being held in storage in Memorial Park, outside the New York City Medical Examiner's facilities. It was expected that the remains would be moved in 2013 to a repository behind a wall at the 9/11 museum. In July 2011, a team of scientists at the Office of Chief Medical Examiner was still trying to identify remains, in the hope that improved technology will allow them to identify other victims.[164] On August 7, 2017, the 1,641st victim was identified as a result of newly available DNA technology,[165] and a 1,642nd on July 26, 2018.[166] A further 1,111 victims are yet to be identified.[166]

Damage

Further information: Collapse of the World Trade Center

World Trade Center site (Ground Zero) with an overlay showing the original building locations

The Pentagon was damaged by fire and partly collapsed.

The aftermath of the World Trade Center attacks, as seen from space by the Landsat 7 satellite[167]

Along with the 110-floor Twin Towers, numerous other buildings at the World Trade Center site were destroyed or badly damaged, including WTC buildings 3 through 7 and St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church.[168] The North Tower, South Tower, the Marriott Hotel (3 WTC), and 7 WTC were destroyed. The U.S. Customs House (6 World Trade Center), 4 World Trade Center, 5 World Trade Center, and both pedestrian bridges connecting buildings were severely damaged. The Deutsche Bank Building (still popularly referred to as the Bankers Trust Building) on 130 Liberty Street was partially damaged and demolished some years later, starting in 2007.[169][170] The two buildings of the World Financial Center also suffered damage.[169] The last fires at the World Trade Center site were extinguished on December 20, exactly 100 days after the attacks.[171]

The Deutsche Bank Building across Liberty Street from the World Trade Center complex was later condemned as uninhabitable because of toxic conditions inside the office tower, and was deconstructed.[172][173] The Borough of Manhattan Community College's Fiterman Hall at 30 West Broadway was condemned due to extensive damage in the attacks, and was reopened in 2012.[174] Other neighboring buildings (including 90 West Street and the Verizon Building) suffered major damage but have been restored.[175] World Financial Center buildings, One Liberty Plaza, the Millenium Hilton, and 90 Church Street had moderate damage and have since been restored.[176] Communications equipment on top of the North Tower was also destroyed, with only WCBS-TV maintaining a backup transmitter on the Empire State Building, but media stations were quickly able to reroute the signals and resume their broadcasts.[168][177]

The PATH train system's World Trade Center station was located under the complex. As a result, the entire station was demolished completely when the towers collapsed, and the tunnels leading to Exchange Place station in Jersey City, New Jersey were

flooded with water.[178] The station was rebuilt as the \$4 billion World Trade Center Transportation Hub, which reopened in March 2015.[179][180] The Cortlandt Street station on the New York City Subway's IRT Broadway–Seventh Avenue Line was also in close proximity to the World Trade Center complex, and the entire station, along with the surrounding track, was reduced to rubble.[181] The latter station was rebuilt and reopened to the public on September 8, 2018.[182]

The Pentagon was severely damaged by the impact of American Airlines Flight 77 and ensuing fires, causing one section of the building to collapse.[183] As the airplane approached the Pentagon, its wings knocked down light poles and its right engine hit a power generator before crashing into the western side of the building.[184][185] The plane hit the Pentagon at the first-floor level. The front part of the fuselage disintegrated on impact, while the mid and tail sections kept moving for another fraction of a second.[186] Debris from the tail section penetrated furthest into the building, breaking through 310 feet (94 m) of the three outermost of the building's five rings.[186][187]

Rescue efforts

Main article: Rescue and recovery effort after the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center

EMS workers rescue and evacuate an injured victim of the Pentagon attack. The New York City Fire Department deployed 200 units (half of the department) to the World Trade Center. Their efforts were supplemented by numerous off-duty firefighters and emergency medical technicians.[188][189][190] The New York City Police Department sent Emergency Service Units and other police personnel and deployed its aviation unit. Once on the scene, the FDNY, the NYPD, and the PAPD did not coordinate efforts and performed redundant searches for civilians.[188][191] As conditions deteriorated, the NYPD aviation unit relayed information to police commanders, who issued orders for its personnel to evacuate the towers; most NYPD officers were able to safely evacuate before the buildings collapsed.[191][192] With separate command posts set up and incompatible radio communications between the agencies, warnings were not passed along to FDNY commanders.

After the first tower collapsed, FDNY commanders issued evacuation warnings. Due to technical difficulties with malfunctioning radio repeater systems, many firefighters never heard the evacuation orders. 9-1-1 dispatchers also received information from callers that was not passed along to commanders on the scene.[189] Within hours of the attack, a substantial search and rescue operation was launched. After months of around-the-clock operations, the World Trade Center site was cleared by the end of May 2002.[193]

Aftermath

Further information: Aftermath of the September 11 attacks, Airport security repercussions due to the September 11 attacks, Closings and cancellations following the September 11 attacks, Reactions to the September 11 attacks, U.S. government response to the September 11 attacks, U.S. military response during the September 11 attacks, and September 11 Victim Compensation Fund

The aftermath of the 9/11 attack resulted in immediate responses to the event, including domestic reactions, hate crimes, Muslim American responses to the event, international responses to the attack, and military responses to the events. An extensive compensation program was quickly established by Congress in the aftermath to compensate the victims and families of victims of the 9/11 attack as well.[194][195]

Immediate response

President George W. Bush is briefed on the attacks in Sarasota, Florida.

Play media

Eight hours after the attacks, Donald Rumsfeld, then U.S. Secretary of Defense, declares "The Pentagon is functioning."

At 8:32 a.m. FAA officials were notified Flight 11 had been hijacked and they, in turn, notified the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). NORAD scrambled two F-15s from Otis Air National Guard Base in Massachusetts and they were airborne by 8:53 a.m.[196] Because of slow and confused communication from FAA officials, NORAD had 9 minutes' notice that Flight 11 had been hijacked, and no notice about any of the other flights before they crashed.[196] After both of the Twin Towers had already been hit, more fighters were scrambled from Langley Air Force Base in Virginia at 9:30 a.m.[196] At 10:20 a.m. Vice President Dick Cheney issued orders to shoot down any commercial aircraft that could be positively identified as being hijacked. These instructions were not relayed in time for the fighters to take action.[196][197][198][199] Some fighters took to the air without live ammunition, knowing that to prevent the hijackers from striking their intended targets, the pilots might have to intercept and crash their fighters into the hijacked planes, possibly ejecting at the last moment.[200]

For the first time in U.S. history, the emergency preparedness plan called Security Control of Air Traffic and Air Navigation Aids (SCATANA) was invoked,[201] thus stranding tens of thousands of passengers across the world.[202] Ben Sliney, in his first day as the National Operations Manager of the FAA,[203] ordered that American airspace would be closed to all international flights, causing about five hundred flights to be turned back or redirected to other countries. Canada received 226 of the diverted flights and launched Operation Yellow Ribbon to deal with the large numbers of grounded planes and stranded passengers.[204]

The 9/11 attacks had immediate effects on the American people.[205] Police and rescue workers from around the country took a leave of absence from their jobs and traveled to New York City to help recover bodies from the twisted remnants of the Twin Towers.[206] Blood donations across the U.S. surged in the weeks after 9/11.[207][208]

The deaths of adults in the attacks resulted in over 3,000 children losing a parent.[209] Subsequent studies documented children's reactions to these actual losses and to feared losses of life, the protective environment in the aftermath of the attacks, and effects on surviving caregivers.[210][211][212]

Domestic reactions

Play media

George W. Bush's address to the people of the United States, September 11, 2001, 8:30 p.m. EDT.

Play media

Bush making remarks from Ground Zero on September 14, 2001

During a speech to a joint session of Congress, President George W. Bush pledges "to defend freedom against terrorism", September 20, 2001 (audio only).

Following the attacks, President George W. Bush's approval rating soared to 90%.[213]

On September 20, 2001, he addressed the nation and a joint session of the United States Congress regarding the events of September 11 and the subsequent nine days of rescue and recovery efforts, and described his intended response to the attacks. New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani's highly visible role won him high praise in New York and nationally.[214]

Many relief funds were immediately set up to assist victims of the attacks, with the task of providing financial assistance to the survivors of the attacks and to the families of victims. By the deadline for victim's compensation on September 11, 2003, 2,833 applications had been received from the families of those who were killed.[215]

Contingency plans for the continuity of government and the evacuation of leaders were implemented soon after the attacks.[202] Congress was not told that the United States had been under a continuity of government status until February 2002.[216]

In the largest restructuring of the U.S. government in contemporary history, the United States enacted the Homeland Security Act of 2002, creating the Department of Homeland Security. Congress also passed the USA PATRIOT Act, saying it would help detect and prosecute terrorism and other crimes.[217] Civil liberties groups have criticized the PATRIOT Act, saying it allows law enforcement to invade the privacy of citizens and that it eliminates judicial oversight of law enforcement and domestic intelligence.[218][219][220] In an effort to effectively combat future acts of terrorism, the National Security Agency (NSA) was given broad powers. NSA commenced warrantless surveillance of telecommunications, which was sometimes criticized since it permitted the agency "to eavesdrop on telephone and e-mail communications between the United States and people overseas without a warrant".[221] In response to requests by various intelligence agencies, the United States Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court permitted an expansion of powers by the U.S. government in seeking, obtaining, and sharing information on U.S. citizens as well as non-U.S. people from around the world.[222]

Hate crimes

A fireman looks up at the remains of the South Tower.

A fireman can be seen in silhouette at the base of the rubble.

Shortly after the attacks, President Bush made a public appearance at Washington, D.C.'s largest Islamic Center and acknowledged the "incredibly valuable contribution" that millions of American Muslims made to their country and called for them "to be treated with respect." [223] Numerous incidents of harassment and hate crimes against

Muslims and South Asians were reported in the days following the attacks.[224][225][226] Sikhs were also targeted because Sikh males usually wear turbans, which are stereotypically associated with Muslims. There were reports of attacks on mosques and other religious buildings (including the firebombing of a Hindu temple), and assaults on people, including one murder: Balbir Singh Sodhi, a Sikh mistaken for a Muslim, was fatally shot on September 15, 2001, in Mesa, Arizona.[226] Two dozen members of Osama bin Laden's family were urgently evacuated out of the country on a private charter plane under FBI supervision three days after the attacks.[227]

According to an academic study, people perceived to be Middle Eastern were as likely to be victims of hate crimes as followers of Islam during this time. The study also found a similar increase in hate crimes against people who may have been perceived as Muslims, Arabs, and others thought to be of Middle Eastern origin.[228] A report by the South Asian American advocacy group known as South Asian Americans Leading Together, documented media coverage of 645 bias incidents against Americans of South Asian or Middle Eastern descent between September 11 and 17. Various crimes such as vandalism, arson, assault, shootings, harassment, and threats in numerous places were documented.[229][230]

Muslim American response

Muslim organizations in the United States were swift to condemn the attacks and called "upon Muslim Americans to come forward with their skills and resources to help alleviate the sufferings of the affected people and their families".[231] These organizations included the Islamic Society of North America, American Muslim Alliance, American Muslim Council, Council on American-Islamic Relations, Islamic Circle of North America, and the Shari'a Scholars Association of North America. Along with monetary donations, many Islamic organizations launched blood drives and provided medical assistance, food, and shelter for victims.[232][233][234]

International reactions

Main article: Reactions to the September 11 attacks

The attacks were denounced by mass media and governments worldwide. Across the globe, nations offered pro-American support and solidarity.[235] Leaders in most Middle Eastern countries, and Afghanistan, condemned the attacks. Iraq was a notable exception, with an immediate official statement that, "the American cowboys are reaping the fruit of their crimes against humanity".[236] The government of Saudi Arabia officially condemned the attacks, but privately many Saudis favored bin Laden's cause.[237][238] Although Palestinian Authority (PA) president Yasser Arafat also condemned the attacks, there were reports of celebrations of disputed size in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem.[239][240] Footage by CNN[vague] and other news outlets were suggested to be from 1991, which was later proven to be a false accusation, resulting in a statement being issued by CNN.[241][242] As in the United States, the aftermath of the attacks saw tensions increase in other countries between Muslims and non-Muslims.[243]

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1368 condemned the attacks, and

expressed readiness to take all necessary steps to respond and combat all forms of terrorism in accordance with their Charter.[244] Numerous countries introduced anti-terrorism legislation and froze bank accounts they suspected of al-Qaeda ties.[245][246] Law enforcement and intelligence agencies in a number of countries arrested alleged terrorists.[247][248]

British Prime Minister Tony Blair said Britain stood "shoulder to shoulder" with the United States.[249] A few days later, Blair flew to Washington, D.C. to affirm British solidarity with the United States. In a speech to Congress, nine days after the attacks, which Blair attended as a guest, President Bush declared "America has no truer friend than Great Britain." [250] Subsequently, Prime Minister Blair embarked on two months of diplomacy to rally international support for military action; he held 54 meetings with world leaders and traveled more than 40,000 miles (60,000 km).[251]

Vladimir Putin (right) and his wife attend a commemoration service for the victims of the terrorist attacks, November 16, 2001.

In the aftermath of the attacks, tens of thousands of people attempted to flee Afghanistan due to the possibility of a military retaliation by the United States. Pakistan, already home to many Afghan refugees from previous conflicts, closed its border with Afghanistan on September 17, 2001. Approximately one month after the attacks, the United States led a broad coalition of international forces to overthrow the Taliban regime from Afghanistan for their harboring of al-Qaeda.[252] Though Pakistani authorities were initially reluctant to align themselves with the United States against the Taliban, they permitted the coalition access to their military bases, and arrested and handed over to the U.S. over 600 suspected al-Qaeda members.[253][254]

The U.S. set up the Guantanamo Bay detention camp to hold inmates they defined as "illegal enemy combatants". The legitimacy of these detentions has been questioned by the European Union and human rights organizations.[255][256][257]

On September 25, 2001, Iran's fifth president, Mohammad Khatami meeting British Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, said: "Iran fully understands the feelings of the Americans about the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington on September 11." He said although the American administrations had been at best indifferent about terrorist operations in Iran (since 1979), the Iranians instead felt differently and had expressed their sympathetic feelings with bereaved Americans in the tragic incidents in the two cities. He also stated that "Nations should not be punished in place of terrorists." [258] According to Radio Farda's website, when the attacks' news was released, some Iranian citizens gathered in front of the Embassy of Switzerland in Tehran, which serves as the protecting power of the United States in Iran (U.S. interests protecting office in Iran), to express their sympathy and some of them lit candles as a symbol of mourning. This piece of news at Radio Farda's website also states that in 2011, on the anniversary of the attacks, United States Department of State, published a post at its blog, in which the Department thanked Iranian people for their sympathy and stated that they would never forget Iranian people's kindness on those harsh days.[259] After the attacks, both the President[260][261] and the Supreme Leader of Iran, condemned the attacks. The BBC and Time magazine published

reports on holding candlelit vigils for the victims by Iranian citizens at their websites.[262][263] According to Politico Magazine, following the attacks, Sayyed Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of Iran, "suspended the usual 'Death to America' chants at Friday prayers" temporarily.[264]

In a speech by the Nizari Ismaili Imam at the Nobel Institute in 2005, Aga Khan IV stated that the "9/11 attack on the United States was a direct consequence of the international community ignoring the human tragedy that was Afghanistan at that time".[265]

In September 2001, shortly after the attacks, Greek soccer fans burned an Israeli flag and unsuccessfully tried to burn an American flag. Though the American flag did not catch fire, the fans booed during a moment of silence for victims of the attacks.[266]

Military operations

Further information: War on Terror

At 2:40 p.m. in the afternoon of September 11, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was issuing rapid orders to his aides to look for evidence of Iraqi involvement. According to notes taken by senior policy official Stephen Cambone, Rumsfeld asked for, "Best info fast. Judge whether good enough hit S.H. [Saddam Hussein] at same time. Not only UBL" [Osama bin Laden].[267] Cambone's notes quoted Rumsfeld as saying, "Need to move swiftly—Near term target needs—go massive—sweep it all up. Things related and not."[268][269] In a meeting at Camp David on September 15 the Bush administration rejected the idea of attacking Iraq in response to 9/11.[270] Nonetheless, they later invaded the country with allies, citing "Saddam Hussein's support for terrorism".[271] At the time, as many as 7 in 10 Americans believed the Iraqi president played a role in the 9/11 attacks.[272] Three years later, Bush conceded that he had not.[273]

U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan

The NATO council declared that the terrorist attacks on the United States were an attack on all NATO nations that satisfied Article 5 of the NATO charter. This marked the first invocation of Article 5, which had been written during the Cold War with an attack by the Soviet Union in mind.[274] Australian Prime Minister John Howard who was in Washington, D.C. during the attacks invoked Article IV of the ANZUS treaty.[275] The Bush administration announced a War on Terror, with the stated goals of bringing bin Laden and al-Qaeda to justice and preventing the emergence of other terrorist networks.[276] These goals would be accomplished by imposing economic and military sanctions against states harboring terrorists, and increasing global surveillance and intelligence sharing.[277]

On September 14, 2001, the U.S. Congress passed the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Terrorists. Still in effect, it grants the President the authority to use all "necessary and appropriate force" against those whom he determined "planned, authorized, committed or aided" the September 11 attacks, or who harbored said persons or groups.[278]

On October 7, 2001, the War in Afghanistan began when U.S. and British forces initiated aerial bombing campaigns targeting Taliban and al-Qaeda camps, then later invaded Afghanistan with ground troops of the Special Forces.[279] This eventually led to the overthrow of the Taliban rule of Afghanistan with the Fall of Kandahar on December 7, 2001, by U.S.-led coalition forces.[280] Conflict in Afghanistan between the Taliban insurgency and the Afghan forces backed by NATO Resolute Support Mission is ongoing. The Philippines and Indonesia, among other nations with their own internal conflicts with Islamic terrorism, also increased their military readiness.[281][282]

The military forces of the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran cooperated with each other to overthrow the Taliban regime which had had conflicts with the government of Iran.[264] Iran's Quds Force helped U.S. forces and Afghan rebels in the 2001 uprising in Herat.[283][284][285]

Effects

Health issues

Main article: Health effects arising from the September 11 attacks

Two survivors are covered in dust after the collapse of the towers. Hundreds of thousands of tons of toxic debris containing more than 2,500 contaminants, including known carcinogens, were spread across Lower Manhattan due to the collapse of the Twin Towers.[286][287] Exposure to the toxins in the debris is alleged to have contributed to fatal or debilitating illnesses among people who were at Ground Zero.[288][289] The Bush administration ordered the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to issue reassuring statements regarding air quality in the aftermath of the attacks, citing national security, but the EPA did not determine that air quality had returned to pre-September 11 levels until June 2002.[290]

Health effects extended to residents, students, and office workers of Lower Manhattan and nearby Chinatown.[291] Several deaths have been linked to the toxic dust, and the victims' names were included in the World Trade Center memorial.[292] Approximately 18,000 people have been estimated to have developed illnesses as a result of the toxic dust.[293] There is also scientific speculation that exposure to various toxic products in the air may have negative effects on fetal development. A notable children's environmental health center is currently[when?] analyzing the children whose mothers were pregnant during the WTC collapse, and were living or working nearby.[294] A study of rescue workers released in April 2010 found that all those studied had impaired lung functions, and that 30–40% were reporting little or no improvement in persistent symptoms that started within the first year of the attack.[295]

Years after the attacks, legal disputes over the costs of illnesses related to the attacks were still in the court system. On October 17, 2006, a federal judge rejected New York City's refusal to pay for health costs for rescue workers, allowing for the possibility of numerous suits against the city.[296] Government officials have been faulted for urging the public to return to lower Manhattan in the weeks shortly after the attacks. Christine Todd Whitman, administrator of the EPA in the aftermath of the attacks, was heavily criticized by a U.S. District Judge for incorrectly saying that the area was

environmentally safe.[297] Mayor Giuliani was criticized for urging financial industry personnel to return quickly to the greater Wall Street area.[298]

On December 22, 2010, the United States Congress passed the James L. Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act, which President Barack Obama signed into law on January 2, 2011. It allocated \$4.2 billion to create the World Trade Center Health Program, which provides testing and treatment for people suffering from long-term health problems related to the 9/11 attacks.[299][300] The WTC Health Program replaced preexisting 9/11-related health programs such as the Medical Monitoring and Treatment Program and the WTC Environmental Health Center program.[300]

Economic

Main article: Economic effects arising from the September 11 attacks

The table shows that the 9/11 attacks had a major effect on the economy of New York City (in red), compared to the United States' economy overall (in blue).

The attacks had a significant economic impact on United States and world markets.[301] The stock exchanges did not open on September 11 and remained closed until September 17. Reopening, the Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA) fell 684 points, or 7.1%, to 8921, a record-setting one-day point decline.[302] By the end of the week, the DJIA had fallen 1,369.7 points (14.3%), at the time its largest one-week point drop in history.[303] In 2001 dollars, U.S. stocks lost \$1.4 trillion in valuation for the week.[303]

In New York City, about 430,000 job-months and \$2.8 billion in wages were lost in the first three months after the attacks. The economic effects were mainly on the economy's export sectors.[304] The city's GDP was estimated to have declined by \$27.3 billion for the last three months of 2001 and all of 2002. The U.S. government provided \$11.2 billion in immediate assistance to the Government of New York City in September 2001, and \$10.5 billion in early 2002 for economic development and infrastructure needs.[305]

U.S. deficit and debt increases 2001–2008

Also hurt were small businesses in Lower Manhattan near the World Trade Center, 18,000 of which were destroyed or displaced, resulting in lost jobs and their consequent wages. Assistance was provided by Small Business Administration loans, federal government Community Development Block Grants, and Economic Injury Disaster Loans.[305] Some 31,900,000 square feet (2,960,000 m²) of Lower Manhattan office space was damaged or destroyed.[306] Many wondered whether these jobs would return, and if the damaged tax base would recover.[307] Studies of the economic effects of 9/11 show the Manhattan office real-estate market and office employment were less affected than first feared, because of the financial services industry's need for face-to-face interaction.[308][309]

North American air space was closed for several days after the attacks and air travel decreased upon its reopening, leading to a nearly 20% cutback in air travel capacity, and exacerbating financial problems in the struggling U.S. airline industry.[310]

The September 11 attacks also led to the U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq,[311] as well as additional homeland security spending, totaling at least \$5 trillion.[312]

Cultural influence

Main article: Cultural influence of the September 11 attacks

The impact of 9/11 extends beyond geopolitics into society and culture in general. Immediate responses to 9/11 included greater focus on home life and time spent with family, higher church attendance, and increased expressions of patriotism such as the flying of flags.[313] The radio industry responded by removing certain songs from playlists, and the attacks have subsequently been used as background, narrative, or thematic elements in film, television, music, and literature. Already-running television shows as well as programs developed after 9/11 have reflected post-9/11 cultural concerns.[314] 9/11 conspiracy theories have become social phenomena, despite lack of support from expert scientists, engineers, and historians.[315] 9/11 has also had a major impact on the religious faith of many individuals; for some it strengthened, to find consolation to cope with the loss of loved ones and overcome their grief; others started to question their faith or lost it entirely, because they could not reconcile it with their view of religion.[316][317]

The culture of America succeeding the attacks is noted for heightened security and an increased demand thereof, as well as paranoia and anxiety regarding future terrorist attacks that includes most of the nation. Psychologists have also confirmed that there has been an increased amount of national anxiety in commercial air travel.[318] Anti-Muslim hate crimes rose nearly ten-fold in 2001, and have subsequently remained "roughly five times higher than the pre-9/11 rate." [319]

Government policies toward terrorism

As a result of the attacks, many governments across the world passed legislation to combat terrorism.[320] In Germany, where several of the 9/11 terrorists had resided and taken advantage of that country's liberal asylum policies, two major anti-terrorism packages were enacted. The first removed legal loopholes that permitted terrorists to live and raise money in Germany. The second addressed the effectiveness and communication of intelligence and law enforcement.[321] Canada passed the Canadian Anti-Terrorism Act, their first anti-terrorism law.[322] The United Kingdom passed the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 and the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005.[323][324] New Zealand enacted the Terrorism Suppression Act 2002.[325]

In the United States, the Department of Homeland Security was created by the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to coordinate domestic anti-terrorism efforts. The USA Patriot Act gave the federal government greater powers, including the authority to detain foreign terror suspects for a week without charge, to monitor telephone communications, e-mail, and Internet use by terror suspects, and to prosecute suspected terrorists without time restrictions. The FAA ordered that airplane cockpits be reinforced to prevent terrorists gaining control of planes, and assigned sky marshals to flights. Further, the Aviation and Transportation Security Act made the federal government, rather than airports, responsible for airport security. The law created the

Transportation Security Administration to inspect passengers and luggage, causing long delays and concern over passenger privacy.[326] After suspected abuses of the USA Patriot Act were brought to light in June 2013 with articles about collection of American call records by the NSA and the PRISM program (see Global surveillance disclosures (2013–present)), Representative Jim Sensenbrenner, Republican of Wisconsin, who introduced the Patriot Act in 2001, said that the National Security Agency overstepped its bounds.[327][328]

Investigations

FBI

Further information: Hijackers in the September 11 attacks

Immediately after the attacks, the Federal Bureau of Investigation started PENTTBOM, the largest criminal inquiry in the history of the United States. At its height, more than half of the FBI's agents worked on the investigation and followed a half-million leads.[329] The FBI concluded that there was "clear and irrefutable" evidence linking al-Qaeda and bin Laden to the attacks.[330]

Mohamed Atta, an Egyptian national, was the ringleader of the hijackers. The FBI was quickly able to identify the hijackers, including leader Mohamed Atta, when his luggage was discovered at Boston's Logan Airport. Atta had been forced to check two of his three bags due to space limitations on the 19-seat commuter flight he took to Boston. Due to a new policy instituted to prevent flight delays, the luggage failed to make it aboard American Airlines Flight 11 as planned. The luggage contained the hijackers' names, assignments, and al-Qaeda connections. "It had all these Arab-language [sic] papers that amounted to the Rosetta stone of the investigation", said one FBI agent.[331] Within hours of the attacks, the FBI released the names and in many cases the personal details of the suspected pilots and hijackers.[332][333] On September 27, 2001, they released photos of all 19 hijackers, along with information about possible nationalities and aliases.[334] Fifteen of the men were from Saudi Arabia, two from the United Arab Emirates, one from Egypt, and one from Lebanon.[335]

By midday, the U.S. National Security Agency and German intelligence agencies had intercepted communications pointing to Osama bin Laden.[336] Two of the hijackers were known to have travelled with a bin Laden associate to Malaysia in 2000[337] and hijacker Mohammed Atta had previously gone to Afghanistan.[338] He and others were part of a terrorist cell in Hamburg.[339] One of the members of the Hamburg cell was discovered to have been in communication with Khalid Sheik Mohammed who was identified as a member of al-Qaeda.[340]

Authorities in the United States and United Kingdom also obtained electronic intercepts, including telephone conversations and electronic bank transfers, which indicate that Mohammed Atef, a bin Laden deputy, was a key figure in the planning of the 9/11 attacks. Intercepts were also obtained that revealed conversations that took place days before September 11 between bin Laden and an associate in Pakistan. In those conversations, the two referred to "an incident that would take place in America

on, or around, September 11" and they discussed potential repercussions. In another conversation with an associate in Afghanistan, bin Laden discussed the "scale and effects of a forthcoming operation." These conversations did not specifically mention the World Trade Center or Pentagon, or other specifics.[341]

Origins of the 19 hijackers

Nationality

Number

Saudi Arabia

15

United Arab Emirates

2

Egypt

1

Lebanon

1

The FBI did not record the 2,977 deaths from the attacks in their annual violent crime index for 2001. In a disclaimer, the FBI stated that "the number of deaths is so great that combining it with the traditional crime statistics will have an outlier effect that falsely skews all types of measurements in the program's analyses." [342] New York City also did not include the deaths in their annual crime statistics for 2001.[343]

CIA

In 2004, John L. Helgerson, the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), conducted an internal review of the agency's pre-9/11 performance and was harshly critical of senior CIA officials for not doing everything possible to confront terrorism.[344] According to Philip Giraldi in *The American Conservative*, Helgerson criticized their failure to stop two of the 9/11 hijackers, Nawaf al-Hazmi and Khalid al-Mihdhar, as they entered the United States and their failure to share information on the two men with the FBI.[345][better source needed]

In May 2007, senators from both major U.S. political parties drafted legislation to make the review public. One of the backers, Senator Ron Wyden said, "The American people have a right to know what the Central Intelligence Agency was doing in those critical months before 9/11." [346] The report was released in 2009 by President Barack Obama.[344]

Congressional inquiry

Main article: Joint Inquiry into Intelligence Community Activities before and after the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001

In February 2002, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence formed a joint inquiry into the performance of the U.S. Intelligence Community.[347] Their 832-page report released

in December 2002[348] detailed failings of the FBI and CIA to use available information, including about terrorists the CIA knew were in the United States, in order to disrupt the plots.[349] The joint inquiry developed its information about possible involvement of Saudi Arabian government officials from non-classified sources.[350] Nevertheless, the Bush administration demanded 28 related pages remain classified.[349] In December 2002, the inquiry's chair Bob Graham (D-FL) revealed in an interview that there was "evidence that there were foreign governments involved in facilitating the activities of at least some of the terrorists in the United States." [351] September 11 victim families were frustrated by the unanswered questions and redacted material from the Congressional inquiry and demanded an independent commission.[349] September 11 victim families,[352] members of congress[353][354] and the Saudi Arabian government are still seeking release of the documents.[355][356] In June 2016, CIA chief John Brennan said that he believes 28 redacted pages of a congressional inquiry into 9/11 will soon be made public, and that they will prove that the government of Saudi Arabia had no involvement in the September 11 attacks.[357]

In September 2016, the Congress passed the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act that would allow relatives of victims of the September 11 attacks to sue Saudi Arabia for its government's alleged role in the attacks.[358][359][360]

9/11 Commission

Main articles: 9/11 Commission, 9/11 Commission Report, and Criticism of the 9/11 Commission

The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Commission), chaired by Thomas Kean and Lee H. Hamilton, was formed in late 2002 to prepare a thorough account of the circumstances surrounding the attacks, including preparedness for and the immediate response to the attacks.[361] On July 22, 2004, the Commission issued the 9/11 Commission Report. The report detailed the events of 9/11, found the attacks were carried out by members of al-Qaeda, and examined how security and intelligence agencies were inadequately coordinated to prevent the attacks. Formed from an independent bipartisan group of mostly former Senators, Representatives, and Governors, the commissioners explained, "We believe the 9/11 attacks revealed four kinds of failures: in imagination, policy, capabilities, and management".[362] The Commission made numerous recommendations on how to prevent future attacks, and in 2011 was dismayed that several of its recommendations had yet to be implemented.[363]

National Institute of Standards and Technology

Main article: The NIST World Trade Center Disaster Investigation

See also: 7 World Trade Center § 9/11 and collapse

The exterior support columns from the lower level of the South Tower remain standing after the collapse of the building.

The U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) investigated the collapses of the Twin Towers and 7 WTC. The investigations examined why the buildings collapsed and what fire protection measures were in place, and evaluated

how fire protection systems might be improved in future construction.[364] The investigation into the collapse of 1 WTC and 2 WTC was concluded in October 2005 and that of 7 WTC was completed in August 2008.[365]

NIST found that the fireproofing on the Twin Towers' steel infrastructures was blown off by the initial impact of the planes and that, had this not occurred, the towers likely would have remained standing.[366] A 2007 study of the north tower's collapse published by researchers of Purdue University determined that, since the plane's impact had stripped off much of the structure's thermal insulation, the heat from a typical office fire would have softened and weakened the exposed girders and columns enough to initiate the collapse regardless of the number of columns cut or damaged by the impact.[367][368]

The director of the original investigation stated that "the towers really did amazingly well. The terrorist aircraft didn't bring the buildings down; it was the fire which followed. It was proven that you could take out two-thirds of the columns in a tower and the building would still stand." [369] The fires weakened the trusses supporting the floors, making the floors sag. The sagging floors pulled on the exterior steel columns causing the exterior columns to bow inward. With the damage to the core columns, the buckling exterior columns could no longer support the buildings, causing them to collapse. Additionally, the report found the towers' stairwells were not adequately reinforced to provide adequate emergency escape for people above the impact zones.[370] NIST concluded that uncontrolled fires in 7 WTC caused floor beams and girders to heat and subsequently "caused a critical support column to fail, initiating a fire-induced progressive collapse that brought the building down".[365]

Alleged Saudi role

Main articles: Alleged Saudi role in September 11 attacks, Saudi Arabia–United States relations, and Saudi Arabia and state-sponsored terrorism

In July 2016, the Obama administration released a document, compiled by US investigators Dana Lesemann and Michael Jacobson, known as "File 17", [371] which contains a list naming three dozen people, including the suspected Saudi intelligence officers attached to Saudi Arabia's embassy in Washington, D.C., [372] which connects Saudi Arabia to the hijackers. [373][374]

Rebuilding

Main articles: Construction of One World Trade Center, World Trade Center site, and World Trade Center (2001–present)

Rebuilt One World Trade Center nearing completion in July 2013

On the day of the attacks, New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani stated: "We will rebuild. We're going to come out of this stronger than before, politically stronger, economically stronger. The skyline will be made whole again." [375]

The damaged section of the Pentagon was rebuilt and occupied within a year of the attacks. [376] The temporary World Trade Center PATH station opened in late 2003 and construction of the new 7 World Trade Center was completed in 2006. Work on rebuilding the main World Trade Center site was delayed until late 2006 when

leaseholder Larry Silverstein and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey agreed on financing.[377] The construction of One World Trade Center began on April 27, 2006, and reached its full height on May 20, 2013. The spire was installed atop the building at that date, putting 1 WTC's height at 1,776 feet (541 m) and thus claiming the title of the tallest building in the Western Hemisphere.[378] One WTC finished construction and opened on November 3, 2014.[12][379]

On the World Trade Center site, three more office towers were to be built one block east of where the original towers stood.[380] 4 WTC, meanwhile, opened in November 2013, making it the second tower on the site to open behind 7 World Trade Center, as well as the first building on the Port Authority property.[381] 3 WTC opened on June 11, 2018, becoming the fourth skyscraper at the site to be completed.[382] On the 16th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, a writer for Curbed New York said that although "there is a World Trade Center again", it was not finished, as 2 and 5 WTC did not have definite completion dates, among other things.[383]

Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Executive Director from 2008-2011, Christopher O. Ward, is a survivor of the attacks and is credited with getting the construction of the 9/11 site back on track. [384]

Memorials

See also

Air France Flight 8969 – a plane hijacked by terrorists intended to be crashed into the Eiffel Tower

Alleged Saudi role in September 11 attacks

Bojinka plot – plot by Ramzi Yousef and Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, foiled in 1995, to attack multiple airliners and crash a plane into the CIA headquarters

List of deaths on September 11, 2001

Federal Express Flight 705 – 1994 cockpit attack

List of attacks on U.S. territory

List of aviation incidents involving terrorism

List of major terrorist incidents

Outline of the September 11 attacks

September 11th Victim Compensation Fund

Terrorism in the United States

The 28 pages

Islamophobia

Islamophobia in the United States

1993 World Trade Center bombing – terrorist bombing orchestrated by Yousef intending to cause a collapse of the WTC

Notes

^ The expression 9/11 is typically pronounced "nine eleven" in English, even in places that use the opposite numerical dating convention; the slash is not pronounced.

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The Guardian

The BAE files

Lebanese billionaire is drawn into BAE arms deal inquiry as 'second middleman for Saudis'

- Focus on Swiss accounts of Mohammad Safadi
- Politician is not a target of SFO investigation

David Leigh, Rob Evans and Ewen MacAskill

Sat 2 Dec 2006 06.53 EST

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Another billionaire Saudi middleman was named last night in the Serious Fraud Office's controversial Saudi arms deal inquiry, according to potential witnesses. The SFO is seeking information about any Swiss bank accounts belonging to Mohammad Safadi, a Lebanese politician who has acted for relatives of Prince Sultan, crown prince of Saudi Arabia.

Mr Safadi would not comment last night at his office in Beirut, where he holds the office of public works minister and also controls the Safadi Group. His property firms have received contracts from the British arms company BAE and have interests in office blocks in London worth £120m.

This fresh development in the international investigation follows disclosures that access is being sought to Swiss accounts linked to wealthy British-based arms broker Wafic Said, who has acted for Prince Sultan's sons, Bandar and Khalid.

Neither Mr Safadi nor Mr Said are themselves targets of the SFO's corruption inquiry. But investigators want access to bank accounts to see if BAE has channelled secret funds through them to Saudi government officials. This might be a criminal offence by BAE executives.

Since the SFO approached Swiss authorities with details of offshore accounts it wants to inspect, a political furore has blown up in Britain, with BAE's chief executive, Mike Turner, warning that the Saudis may cancel their current big arms contract with BAE and give it to the French unless police inquiries are halted.

Claims that the Saudis had given Tony Blair a 10-day ultimatum to drop the police probe were not being confirmed last night from any quarter. The Saudi embassy said the claims were "a repackaged old story". In Paris, where Prince Sultan's son Bandar met President Jacques Chirac a week ago for private talks, the French said they would not seek to snatch the £6bn contract for 72 Eurofighters from the British. A French official said: "There is no initiative from the ministry of defence on the Rafale [the French combat aircraft]. We are not trying to do anything to sell the Rafale [to the Saudis]. This is a British contract." But industry sources said France had been lobbying

for a rival deal and was a long-term competitor of the British.

Last night, the attorney general, Lord Goldsmith, said that he had no intention of interfering with the investigation, following talks with the SFO director, Robert Wardle. A spokesman said: "His general position is that he will not stop a prosecution for political reasons in any case."

The SFO said it was pressing ahead "as speedily as circumstances allow". Lawyers familiar with such cases say the main delays are caused by lengthy Swiss procedures before they will open up bank accounts, traditionally highly secret.

Westminster sources say BAE also held up the inquiry itself for several months by refusing to disclose files of payments to agents and by bringing political pressure to stop the SFO using its compulsory production powers. An SFO spokesman said: "Our job is to focus on investigating, doing so thoroughly and as speedily as circumstances allow. If the evidence indicates there is a case to answer we present it before the crown court."

Arms trade campaigners last night accused BAE of exaggerating the threat to British jobs if the present contract were lost. Nicholas Gilby, of the Campaign Against the Arms Trade, said: "Eurofighter's own report says that there is on the best case 11,500 jobs [depending] on Saudi exports in the whole of Europe and probably 4,500 in the UK."

The SFO inquiry, which began when the Guardian obtained documents in 2003 suggesting BAE was running a £60m slush fund to bribe Saudi generals, has expanded to cover secret BAE payments in half a dozen countries, alleged to total more than £1bn.

One potential witness who has been interviewed by the SFO told the Guardian: "I was asked by them about Mr Safadi's role. I told them that his UK firm, Jones Consultants, had paid bills for Prince Turki bin Nasser, head of the Saudi air force."

BAE says it will not comment on the latest disclosures, adding: "BAE Systems is not obstructing the SFO investigation in any way and continues to fully cooperate with the SFO investigation."

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News

Bush urges U.N. to act on assassination report

MAGGIE FARLEY AND ASHRAF KHALIL

THE BALTIMORE SUN

UNITED NATIONS -- President Bush called on the U.N. Security Council yesterday to respond promptly to a report that senior Syrian and Lebanese officials likely plotted the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

"The report strongly suggests that the politically motivated assassination could not have taken place without Syrian involvement," Bush said after helping dedicate a new pavilion at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum in California.

In Damascus, Syrian leaders dismissed the U.N. findings. The government of President Bashar Assad prepared to fight growing Western sentiment to punish it with economic sanctions.

The report and the reaction to it marked the latest escalation in tensions between the United States and Syria. U.S. officials have accused Damascus of harboring militant groups and permitting fighters to cross into Iraq to attack U.S., Iraqi and other forces there.

Calling the report that was delivered Thursday to the Security Council "deeply disturbing," Bush said it "requires the world to look at it very carefully and respond accordingly." He said he had asked Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to urge the Security Council to convene immediately. He did not describe what sort of action he had in mind.

France, with the support of the United States, is preparing a resolution that might urge sanctions on Syrian leaders implicated in the report, U.N. diplomats said yesterday.

The report did not implicate Assad, but it described an August 2004 encounter in which he threatened Hariri, and it cited a witness describing meetings between members of his inner circle planning the assassination over several months.

Chief investigator Detlev Mehlis will brief the council Tuesday. Mehlis' report strongly suggests the involvement of three senior Syrian officials and a Lebanese security official, but he deleted their names hours before the report was released.

He denied that he was pressured by Secretary-General Kofi Annan or anyone else. He said he dropped the names after learning that the report would be circulated beyond the members of the Security Council. He said the witness' claim was credible but since it had not been corroborated, "it could give the wrong impression" of guilt.

"None of these changes were influenced by anyone," he said.

A word processing tool revealed the changes embedded in the publicly released version, showing that key suspects in the plot included Assad's brother Maher; his brother-in-law and head of Syrian Military Intelligence, Assef Shawkat; and his close friend Bahjat Suleyman, along with a Lebanese ally, ex-security chief Jamil Al-Sayyed.

Syrian diplomats in New York and Washington derided the report as unfair and politically motivated. "There is absolutely nothing in that report," said Syrian ambassador to the U.N. Fayssal Mekdad. "It is all speculation and suggestion, and it would not stand up in a court of law. They can continue the investigation and they will see that there is nothing to it."

Mehlis' report said that the Syrian government cooperated minimally with the investigation. Investigators were not able to question witnesses privately, and so their answers tended to be "uniform," Mehlis wrote. Several officials, including Foreign Minister Farouk Charaa, tried to mislead the investigators with false statements, the report said.

The Security Council will also consider a second report next week analyzing whether Syria has fully withdrawn all intelligence and military forces from Lebanon, as demanded by Resolution 1559 adopted in September 2004. If not, Syria could face further sanctions.

The council's meeting could result in the threat of sanctions for Syrian leaders or the nation. France will take the lead, supported by the U.S., as they did with Resolution 1559, which led to the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon.

The Bush administration, frustrated by Syria's failure to crack down on insurgents using it as base to attack Iraq, has been trying to isolate Assad and force him to stop meddling in neighbor states.

Maggie Farley and Ashraf Khalil write for the Los Angeles Times. The Associated Press contributed to this article.

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BBC Newsmenu

Rafik Hariri tribunal: Guilty verdict over assassination of Lebanon ex-PM

18 August 2020

Middle East

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Image copyrightGETTY IMAGES

Image captionThe blast near Beirut's seafront killed Hariri and 21 other people

A UN-backed court has found a member of the militant group Hezbollah guilty of involvement in the assassination of former Lebanese PM Rafik Hariri.

Judges at the Netherlands-based Special Tribunal for Lebanon said Salim Ayyash had a central role in the bomb attack in Beirut in 2005 that killed Hariri.

They acquitted three other defendants, who like Ayyash were tried in absentia.

Hezbollah denied any involvement, and the judges said no evidence implicated the Shia militant group's leaders.

Hariri's son Saad, who is himself a former prime minister, told reporters outside the court: "I think today everybody's expectation was much higher than what came out, but I believe the tribunal came out with a verdict that is satisfying and we accept it."

Image copyrightEPA

Image captionRafik Hariri's son Saad said the family would "not rest until the punishment is carried out"

Now, he said, it was time for Hezbollah to "make sacrifices".

"It is clear that the network responsible is from its ranks," he added. "We will not rest until the punishment is carried out."

The verdict comes at a time of crisis in Lebanon, with the country still reeling from a devastating explosion at Beirut's port two weeks ago that killed at least 180 people.

The blast led to the resignation of the government, already embattled by protests over an economic collapse that has seen many people lose their savings and jobs.

The tribunal's verdicts will disappoint supporters of Rafik Hariri as well the families of the 21 others who were killed and the 226 who were wounded, many grievously.

The man convicted in his absence, Salim Ayyash, was a well-connected, mid-level operative in Hezbollah, the most powerful military and political group in Lebanon. It is classified by the UK, the US and others as a terrorist organisation.

Hezbollah's leader, Hasan Nasrallah, has denied it was involved and refused to allow the arrest of Ayyash or the other men who have been cleared. One of his top military commanders, Mustafa Badreddine, was also indicted until he was killed in Syria in 2016.

The verdict has nevertheless given Rafik Hariri's son Saad, a former prime minister who might get the job again, a lever to use against Hezbollah.

The Hariri camp, and others, believe Ayyash was acting under orders, from Hassan Nasrallah and most likely from Hezbollah's backers, Syria and Iran. Rafik Hariri was seen as a threat to their power in Lebanon.

One of the judges, David Re, said the court had found motive but not evidence.

Even so, the conviction of a Hezbollah man will feed into the fevered political atmosphere in Lebanon.

What's the case about?

Rafik Hariri, a Sunni, was a billionaire businessman who served as prime minister of Lebanon five times following the 1975-90 civil war.

His last term in office ended in 2004, after which he aligned himself with the opposition in parliament and backed calls for Syria to withdraw its forces, which had been in Lebanon since 1976.

Image copyrightREUTERS

Image captionHariri, a billionaire businessman, had urged Syria to leave Lebanon
On the morning of 14 February 2005, Hariri was travelling in a motorcade past the St George Hotel in downtown Beirut when a bomb hidden in a van exploded.

The blast created a crater at least 10m (32ft) wide and 2m deep in the street, and left nearby vehicles smouldering and shopfronts blown out and blackened.

Who were the accused at Rafik Hariri tribunal?

The killing brought tens of thousands of demonstrators onto the streets in protest against the pro-Syrian government, with the finger of blame for the assassination pointed at Lebanon's heavily influential neighbour.

The government resigned two weeks later and Syrian troops pulled out that April.

Image copyrightGETTY IMAGES

Image captionThe killing of Hariri triggered huge anti-government protests in Beirut

After collecting evidence, the UN and Lebanon set up the STL in 2007 to investigate the bombing, and four suspects were ultimately put on trial in absentia.

The prosecution's case relied on the analysis of calls between mobile phones that it said were used to plan, prepare and execute the attack.

A Lebanese investigator who started the trawl of the phone data and made crucial early breakthroughs, Wissam Eid, was assassinated in Beirut in 2008.

What did the judges say?

They found Ayyash, 56, guilty of five charges, including conspiracy aimed at committing a terrorist act, committing a terrorist act by means of an explosive device, and the intentional murder of Hariri with premeditation by using explosive materials.

Image copyrightSPECIAL TRIBUNAL FOR LEBANON

Image captionThe whereabouts of Salim Ayyash remains unknown

STL prosecutors alleged that Ayyash co-ordinated the physical perpetration of the attack and, together with Mustafa Badreddine, the surveillance of Hariri.

Ayyash was also accused of purchasing the van that exploded, and of having played a role in preparing what prosecutors said was a false claim of responsibility made by a Palestinian man on behalf of a fictional Sunni fundamentalist group.

Ayyash's court-appointed defence lawyers said the prosecution's case relied on circumstantial evidence that did not prove his involvement in the conspiracy.

But Judge David Re told the court on Tuesday: "Mr Ayyash had a central role in the execution of the attack and directly contributed to it.

Image copyrightREUTERS

Image captionHezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah rejected the trial as a plot

"Mr Ayyash intended to kill Mr Hariri and had the required knowledge about the circumstances of the assassination mission, including that explosives were the means to be used."

The judge said there was not enough evidence to prove beyond reasonable doubt the guilt of the other defendants - Assad Sabra, 43, Hussein Oneissi, 46, and Hassan Habib Merhi, 54.

The panel also concluded that while Syria and Hezbollah "may have had motives to eliminate" Hariri and some of his political allies, there was "no evidence that the Hezbollah leadership had any involvement in Hariri's murder and there is no direct evidence of Syrian involvement", according to Judge Re.

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Trans World Airlines Flight 847 was a flight from Cairo to San Diego with en route stops in Athens, Rome, Boston, and Los Angeles.[1] On the morning of June 14, 1985, Flight 847 was hijacked shortly after take off from Athens.[2][3] The hijackers demanded the release of 700 Shi'ite Muslims from Israeli custody and took the plane repeatedly to Beirut and Algiers.[1] Later Western analysis considered them members of the Hezbollah militant group, but Hezbollah rejects that conclusion.

TWA Flight 847

N64339, the aircraft involved in the hijacking.

Hijacking

Date

June 14, 1985

Summary

Hijacking

Site

Greek airspace

Aircraft

Aircraft type

Boeing 727-231

Operator

Trans World Airlines

Registration

N64339

Flight origin

Cairo International Airport

1st stopover

Athens (Ellinikon) Int'l Airport

2nd stopover

Leonardo da Vinci Int'l Airport

3rd stopover

Logan International Airport

4th stopover

Los Angeles International Airport

Destination

San Diego International Airport

Passengers

139

Crew

8

Fatalities

1

Survivors

146

The passengers and crew endured a three-day intercontinental ordeal. Some passengers were threatened and some beaten. Passengers with Jewish-sounding names were moved apart from the others. United States Navy diver Robert Stethem was murdered, and his body was thrown onto the apron. Dozens of passengers were held hostage over the next two weeks until released by their captors after some of their demands were met.

Hijacking eventsEdit

Flight 847 was operated with a Boeing 727-200, registration N64339.[4] The flight originated in Cairo on the morning of June 14. After an uneventful flight from Cairo to Athens, a new crew boarded Flight 847. The new crew in Athens were Captain John Testrake, First Officer Phil Maresca, Flight Engineer Christian Zimmerman, flight service manager Uli Derickson, and flight attendants Judy Cox, Hazel Hesp, Elizabeth Howes, and Helen Sheahan.[5]

At 10:10, Flight 847 departed Athens for Rome. It was commandeered shortly after takeoff by two Arabic-speaking Lebanese men who had smuggled a pistol and two grenades through the Athens airport security.[how?] One was later identified as Mohammed Ali Hamadi, who was later captured and sentenced to life imprisonment in Germany.[6] Hamadi is an alleged member of Hezbollah.[7] Assaulting Derickson and breaching the cockpit, and dragging her with them, the hijackers attacked and then pistol-whipped Captain Testrake, First Officer Maresca, and Flight Engineer Zimmerman

To Beirut, then AlgiersEdit

Learn more

This section needs additional citations for verification.

With Captain Testrake being held at gunpoint, the plane was diverted from its original destination of Rome, in airspace over Greece, to the Middle East and made its first stop, for several hours, at the Beirut International Airport in Lebanon, where 19 passengers were allowed to leave in exchange for fuel. Shortly before landing, air traffic control initially refused to let them land in Beirut. Captain Testrake argued with air traffic control until they relented. He said at one point, "He has pulled a hand-grenade pin and he is ready to blow up the aircraft if he has to. We must, I repeat, we must land at Beirut. We must land at Beirut. No alternative." [8]

At the time, Lebanon was in the midst of the Lebanese Civil War, and Beirut was

divided into sectors controlled by different Shia Amal militia and Hezbollah. That afternoon, the aircraft continued on across the Mediterranean to Algiers, where 20 passengers were released during a five-hour stop before heading back to Beirut that night.

Back to BeirutEdit

Robert Stethem

Beirut International Airport was surrounded by a Shia neighborhood. It had no perimeter security and had been over-run by Islamic militias, and nearby residents could simply drive onto the runway.

The hijackers had systematically and regularly beaten all the military passengers, but during this stop, they selected U.S. Navy diver, Robert Stethem, beat him, shot him in the right temple, and dumped his body out of the plane onto the ramp and shot him again, seeking permission from other Shia Muslims operating the control tower to obtain more fuel. Seven American passengers, alleged to have Jewish-sounding surnames, were taken off the jet and held hostage in a Shia prison in Beirut.[9]

Algiers, Beirut againEdit

Nearly a dozen well-armed men joined the hijackers before the plane returned to Algiers the following day, 15 June,[1] where an additional 65 passengers and all five female cabin crew members were released. The hijackers wanted to fly to Tehran,[citation needed] but mysteriously returned to Beirut for a third time on the afternoon of 16 June, and remained there for unknown reasons.

The initial demands of the hijackers included:

Release of the "Kuwait 17", those involved in the 1983 bombing of the U.S. embassy in Kuwait[10]

Release of all 766 mainly Lebanese Shias transferred to Israel's Atleat Prison in conjunction with immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon[1][11]
International condemnation of Israel and the United States[1]

The Greek government released the accomplice, Ali Atwa, and in exchange the hijackers released eight Greek citizens, including Greek pop singer Demis Roussos, to be flown by a Greek government business jet from Algiers back to Athens.

By the afternoon of June 17, the 40 remaining hostages had been taken from the plane and held hostage throughout Beirut by Hezbollah. Nabih Berri was the chief of the Amal militia and the minister of justice in the fractured Lebanon cabinet. One of the hostages was released when he developed heart trouble. The other 39 remained captive until intervention by U.S. President Ronald Reagan with Lebanese officials on 30 June, when they and the pilots held captive on the airplane were collected in a local schoolyard and met with international journalists, then driven to Syria by the International Red Cross to the Sheraton Hotel and a press conference in Damascus.

The hostages then boarded a U.S. Air Force C-141B Starlifter cargo plane and flew to Rhein-Main AB, Hesse, West Germany, where they were met by U.S. Vice President

George H. W. Bush, debriefed, and given medical examinations, then flown to Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland and welcomed home by the president. Over the next several weeks, Israel released over 700 Shia prisoners, while maintaining that the prisoners' release was not related to the hijacking.[2]

AftermathEdit

Nationality

Passengers

Crew

Total

Australia

3

0

3

France

8

1

9

Greece

15

0

15

Italy

11

0

11

United Kingdom

24

0

24

United States

78

7

85

Total

139

8

147

The iconic image of this hijacking was a photograph showing a gun being held to Captain Testrake's head, sticking out of the cockpit window, while he and the other pilots were being interviewed by reporters. The scene was interrupted by one of the French-speaking Hezbollah guards left by the hijackers to hold the crew after most passengers and the cabin crew had been released in Algiers, and the remaining men were held in captivity elsewhere in Beirut. The young militiaman may have unloaded the gun before crashing the scene, as he primarily wanted to be on television.[3]

Flight attendant Uli Derickson was credited with calming one of the hijackers during a fuel-quantity incident during the first leg to Beirut, because she spoke German, the only European language which either hijacker spoke. Notably, she interrupted an attempt to end the hijacking in Algiers when airport officials refused to refuel the plane without payment by offering her own Shell Oil credit card, which was used to charge about \$5,500 for 22,700 L (6,000 gal) of jet fuel, for which she was reimbursed. She also refused to cooperate with the hijackers in identifying for them the passports of any passengers with Jewish-sounding names so they could not be singled out.

USS Stethem, an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer commissioned in 1995, was named in honor of Robert Stethem.[12] The aircraft involved in the hijacking was put back into service. It remained in service for TWA until the aircraft was retired on September 30, 2000. It ceremoniously operated the airline's final revenue flight of their Boeing 727 fleet.[13] The aircraft was later scrapped in May 2002. It had first flown on August 27, 1974, and was delivered to the airline on September 5, 1974.[14]

Alleged perpetratorsEdit

Hezbollah specialist Magnus Ranstorp of the University of St. Andrews credits "leading" Hezbollah members Hassan Izz-Al-Din (later involved in the Kuwait Airways Flight 422 hijacking in 1988) and Mohammed Ali Hammadi, whose brother was one of the heads of the Hezbollah Special Security Apparatus, with assisting Hezbollah operatives in the "supervision and planning of the incident itself and as an active participant in the defusion and resolution." [11]

On October 10, 2001, in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, three of the alleged hijackers, Imad Mugnyiah, Ali Atwa, and Hassan Izz-Al-Din, having been earlier indicted in United States district courts for the 1985 skyjacking of the American airliner, were among the original 22 fugitives announced by President George W. Bush to be placed on the newly formed FBI Most Wanted Terrorists list. Rewards of \$5 million for information leading to the arrest and conviction of Atwa and Izz-Al-Din are still being offered by the United States.

Mohammed Ali Hammadi was arrested in 1987 in Frankfurt, West Germany, while attempting to smuggle liquid explosives, two years after the TWA Flight 847 attack. In addition to the West German charge of illegal importation of explosives, he was tried and convicted of Stethem's 1985 murder and was sentenced to life in prison. However, he was paroled and released by German officials on December 20, 2005, and returned to Lebanon.[15][16] There has been speculation that his parole was granted as part of a covert prisoner swap, in exchange for the release of Susanne Osthoff. Taken hostage in Iraq a month prior, Osthoff was released the week of Hammadi's parole.[17] On February 14, 2006 the United States formally asked the Lebanese government to extradite Mohammed Ali Hammadi for Stethem's murder.[18] On February 24, 2006, he appeared as well on the FBI Most Wanted Terrorists list, under the name Mohammed Ali "Hamadei" (sic). He was among the second group of indicted fugitives to be named by the FBI to the list.[19]

Several news outlets reported the announcement by Hezbollah of the death of Imad Mugniyah in a car bomb explosion in Syria on February 13, 2008.[20] The remaining three fugitives from TWA Flight 847 remain on the list, and at large.[21]

On September 21, 2019, during a cruise ship passport control operation in Mykonos, the Hellenic Police arrested a 65 year old Lebanese as an alleged perpetrator of the hijacking.[22]

Hezbollah reportedly denies culpability in the TWA Flight 847 hijacking, among its denials of numerous other attacks that have been attributed to the group.[23]

2019 arrestEdit

On September 19, 2019, Greek police arrested a 65-year-old Lebanese man who was accused of involvement in the hijacking. The man was arrested at Mykonos during a passport check for cruise ship passengers.[24] He was aboard a cruise ship that had crossed Rhodes, Santorini and Mykonos. Mykonos was the last stop before returning to Turkey.[25] He was later released after police determined it was a case of mistaken identity.[26]

FilmEdit

The Delta Force film of 1986 is based on the TWA 847 hijacking.

The Taking of Flight 847: The Uli Derickson Story is a 1988 TV movie based on the incident focusing on the role of flight attendant Uli Derickson (played by Lindsay Wagner).

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External linksEdit

FBI Most Wanted Terrorists at fbi.gov web site

Top Hezbollah militant slain

John Testrake, 68, TWA pilot who became hero in hijacking

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Ali Atwa

Mohammed Ali Hammadi

The Taking of Flight 847: The Uli Derickson Story
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1983

April 18

Suicide bomber destroys U.S. embassy in Beirut

The U.S. embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, is almost completely destroyed by a car-bomb explosion that kills 63 people, including the suicide bomber and 17 Americans. The terrorist attack was carried out in protest of the U.S. military presence in Lebanon.

In 1975, a bloody civil war erupted in Lebanon, with Palestinian and leftist Muslim guerrillas battling militias of the Christian Phalange Party, the Maronite Christian community, and other groups. During the next few years, Syrian, Israeli, and United Nations interventions failed to resolve the factional fighting, and on August 20, 1982, a multinational force featuring U.S. Marines landed in Beirut to oversee the Palestinian withdrawal from Lebanon.

The Marines left Lebanese territory on September 10 but returned on September 29, following the massacre of Palestinian refugees by a Christian militia. The next day, the first U.S. Marine to die during the mission was killed while defusing a bomb, and on April 18, 1983, the U.S. embassy in Beirut was bombed. On October 23, Lebanese terrorists evaded security measures and drove a truck packed with explosives into the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut, killing 241 U.S. military personnel. Fifty-eight French soldiers were killed almost simultaneously in a separate suicide terrorist attack. On February 7, 1984, U.S. President Ronald Reagan announced the end of U.S. participation in the peacekeeping force, and on February 26 the last U.S. Marines left Beirut

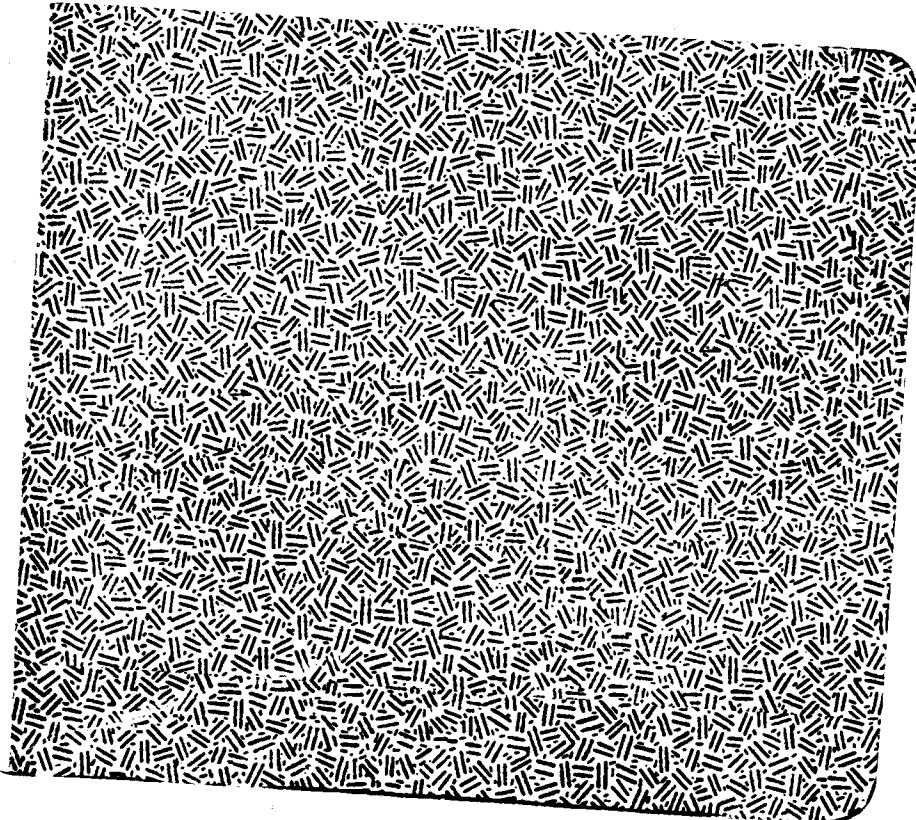
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